National commission on Population

3057. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have constituted a National Commission on Population;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith its terms of reference;

(c) the role of this Commission in controlling the population growth of the country; and

(d) the number of meetings held since the constitution of the said Commission and the details of the decision taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The National Commission on Population (NCP) was constituted on 11th May, 2000. It is headed by the Prime Minister as Chairman and the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission as Vice-Chairman. All Chief Ministers, concerned Central Ministers, all major political parties, specialists, NGOs, private sector and media representatives are the other Members of the Commission. The Terms of Reference of the Commission are given below:

(i) To review, monitor and give directions for the implementation of the National Population Policy with a view to meeting the goals set out in the Policy.

(ii) To promote synergy between demographic, educational, environmental and developmental programmes so as to hasten population stabilization.

(iii) To promote inter-sectoral coordination in planning and implementation across Government agencies of the Central and State Governments, to involve the civil society and the private sector and to explore the possibilities of international cooperation in support of the goals set out in the Policy.

(iv) To facilitate the development of a vigorous people's movement in support of this national effort.

(c) Of the many initiatives taken by the National Commission on Population to help the process of population stabilization in the country, a few are indicated below:

- Recognizing that development and demography have a close inter-relationship, an immediate effort was made to bring together all the relevant Ministries/Departments and a Strategic Support Group of Secretaries of the concerned Departments was created on the basis of whose recommendations several Working/Advisory Groups/Task Forces were constituted by the NCP and concept papers prepared by several Ministries bringing out how they could reorient their programmes to address demographic concerns also. The reports/recommendations of these Groups were forwarded to the concerned Departments/ Divisions of the Planning Commission for being incorporated in the sectoral programmes of the Tenth Five Year Plan.

- Regular review of the impact of the Family Welfare programmes in the high fertility States and the growth rate vis-a-vis national level.

- Identification of 133 districts having TFR > 3.5 for focussed action for population stabilization followed by a Conference of DMs of these districts to discuss and decide about various matters relating to population stabilization.

- Selection of social, economic and demographic indicators for monitoring purpose and mapping and ranking of 569 districts of the country on the basis of 12 such indicators with a view to know the position of each district in relation to them.

- To enable better integration of research related findings for policy formulation two Conferences of demographic research organizations were convened.

- To understand the actual impact of the national family welfare programmes several field visits in the high fertility

areas were made so that the findings could be made use of for restrategising the present programmes and for working out the area specific field level initiatives involving PRIs, NGOs, Women Self-Help Groups and Youth Organizations.

- To further facilitate and help operationalise the convergence of the ongoing social sector programmes and better utilization of the human resources, two Ministerial Conferences were organized.
- A Conference of State Population Commissions was organized where a detailed review of the implementation of the State Population Policies were undertaken. This has given an opportunity for sharing the experiences of better performing States vis-a-vis States which are witnessing high population growth now.
- The NCP also organized a Conference of NGOs with a view to involve voluntary organizations in population stabilization programmes. This was done as part of the effort to build up a vigorous people's movement involving the civil society with the active participation of PRIs, NGOs, VOs, Self-Help Groups and Youth Organizations for formulating and implementing population stabilization programmes.

(d) The full Conference of the National Commission on Population was held only once so far. The first meeting of the Commission gave a clear and categorical message regarding the widespread national concern about the country's burgeoning Population and the need to impart a sense of urgency for taking effective steps to accelerate the process of demographic stabilization.

Eradication of Poverty

3058. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware about China's drive to eradicate poverty;